

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 NEA-06 IO-03 NSC-07 NSCE-00

ACDA-10 SCI-03 EB-03 COME-00 MC-02 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-02 AEC-05 DODE-00 OMB-01 PRS-01 SP-02

DRC-01 /085 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1893

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY DACCA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 08507

LIMDIS

VIENNA FOR US REP TO IAEA

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, IN, CA, UK

SUBJECT: AN INDO-CANADIAN VIEW OF INDIAN NUCLEAR
INTENTIONS

1. SUMMARY: FCO OFFICIAL HAS BEEN TOLD BY PROF. ASHOK
KAPUR ABOUT INDIAN GROUP WHICH HAS BEEN INVITED TO GO TO
OTTAWA AND EXPLAIN INDIAN NUCLEAR INTENTIONS TO CANADIAN
GOVERNMENT AFTER THE ELECTION. HIS BELIEF IS THAT
INDIANS INTEND TO GO AS FAR AS EVIDENT CAPABILITY TO GET
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NUCLEAR ARMS BUT STOP SHORT OF ACTUALLY DEVELOPING THEM.

HE SAYS INDIAN NUCLEAR SCIENTIFIC FRATERNITY IS UPSET BY EXTRAVAGANT BOASTS OF THE POLITICIANS. HE THINKS INDIANS ARE LIKELY IN TIME TO ENTER COMMERCIAL COMPETITION FOR EXPORT REACTORS, ACCEPTING AND APPLYING STRICT INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS. HIGH-POWERED INDIAN MISSION TO OTTAWA WILL TRY TO CONVINCE CANADIANS OF THIS POLICY. CHALMERS APPEARS TO BELIEVE KAPUR'S THESIS. ADDRESSEES' COMMENTS ARE WELCOME. END SUMMARY

2. INDIAN ASHOK KAPUR, WHO IS CURRENTLY PROFESSOR AT CANADIAN UNIVERSITY (AND HAS US ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS) SPOKE TO CHATHAM HOUSE GATHERING ON JUNE 27. PRIVATELY HE GAVE FCO SOUTH ASIAN DEPT. HEAD CHALMERS FOLLOWING INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN POLICY AND OF CANADIAN-INDIAN RELATIONS IN WAKE OF INDIAN NUCLEAR TEST. KAPUR CONVEYED (MEA'S) TREVADI'S REGARDS TO CHALMERS, SO THAT CHALMERS KNOWS INDIANS WISHED HIM TO HAVE KAPUR'S STORY.

3. FIRST PART OF KAPUR'S THESIS IS THAT INDIANS DO NOT INTEND TO ARM WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THEY WILL DEVELOP TO POINT OF POSSESSING AN EVIDENT CAPACITY TO GET SUCH WEAPONS, BUT GO NO FURTHER. KAPUR SAID HE HAD SOUNDED OUT TOP INDIAN MILITARY WHEN HE WAS IN INDIA AFTER THE TEST. (IN CONTEXT OF FACING UP TO CHINA) ARMY COS FELT THERE WOULD BE NO STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE GAINED FOR INDIAN ARMY BY NUCLEAR ARMING. RATHER, HE FEARED NUCLEAR ARMS DEVELOPMENT MIGHT BE USED AS AN EXCUSE FOR ECONOMY LOBBY IN INDIAN PARLIAMENT TO CUT BACK NORMAL ARMY FUNDS.

4. AIR FORCE COS LIKEWISE PERCEIVED NO TACTICAL ADVANTAGE IN NUCLEAR ARMS, THOUGH HE WAS LESS SURE ABOUT ULTIMATE STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE. NAVY WAS ALL FOR NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS, AS WEDGE TO ATTAIN GREATER IMPORTANCE.

5. MISSION INDIA IS PREPARING TO SEND TO EXPLAIN ITS POLICY TO CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WILL BE HIGH-POWERED, ACCORDING TO KAPUR, AND WILL BE PREPARED TO GO BEYOND

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 08507

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PUBLIC INDIAN EXPLANATIONS TO DATE. INDIANS HOPE TO
CONVINCE CANADIANS OF THEIR SINCERITY.

6. KAPUR SAID HE PERCEIVED NO INDIAN DESIRE TO EXPORT
NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY. THIS WAS NEVER MENTIONED BY ANY
RESPONSIBLE INDIAN HE TALKED TO. KAPUR OFFERED TO PAY
\$1,000 IF ONE SUCH COULD BE FOUND. (HERE CHALMERS ADDED
THAT FCO HAS SEARCHED HIGH AND LOW FOR A QUOTE FROM MRS.
GANDHI ALONG THIS LINE - IN LIGHT OF A REFERENCE TO SUCH
BY US REP TO IAEA - BUT HAS FOUND NONE).

7. OTHER PART OF KAPUR'S THESIS IS THAT INDIAN NUCLEAR
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ESTABLISHMENT ITSELF IS UPSET BY BOASTS ASSOCIATED WITH
NUCLEAR TEST. SCIENTISTS ARE AWARE THAT THEY ARE FAR
FROM HAVING DEVELOPED TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATED WITH DIGGING

SOON BE APPARENT AND LEAD TO LOSS OF PRESTIGE. THEY ARE
RESISTING AND MODERATING CLAIMS POLITICIANS SEEM BENT
ON MAKING.

8. IN LONG RUN KAPUR THOUGHT INDIA COULD DEVELOP ADE-
QUATE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY FOR COMMERCIAL EXPORT. IT

WOULD LIKELY ACCEPT INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS AND EXERCISE THEM STRICTLY.

9. CHALMERS HIMSELF INDICATED HE IS IMPRESSED BY THIS LINE OF PRESENTATION AND TENDS TO BELIEVE IT. WE ASSUME HE RECOGNIZES ITS SELF-SERVING NATURE IF (AS WE HAVE TO ASSUME) KAPUR IS NOT COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT OF HIS INDIAN BACKGROUND. NEW DELHI, OTTAWA, AND OTHER ADDRESSEE COMMENTS WOULD BE WELCOME.

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